

for any embargo and requires Congress to approve the embargo for it to extend beyond 100 days. House Resolution 17 also provides greater assurances for contract sanctity.

Unilateral embargoes of U.S. food exports do not hurt or effect any real change on the targeted country. All American farmers have a right to be angry that they are being used by both the executive and legislative branches to carry out symbolic acts so foreign policy-makers can appear to be doing something about our toughest foreign policy problems. Given the fact that in relative terms U.S. commodity and livestock prices are at the lowest level seen in years and that many American farmers are facing financial ruin, our agricultural sector can no longer bear this unfair discriminatory burden for our country.

There are three types of embargoes: Short supply embargoes, foreign policy embargoes, and national security embargoes. Unfortunately, the imposition of any these types of embargoes ends up hurting America's farmers and other Americans working in the agricultural sector of our economy while having little or no impact on the targeted country. Indeed, the people who the authors of these embargoes might intend to harm least, namely American farmers, are harmed the most.

For example, last year the United States nearly lost a 350,000 metric ton wheat sale to Pakistan because of our unilateral non-proliferation sanctions on that country. Seeing that unintended and futile effort a number of us in Congress rushed to reverse that sanction just hours before the bids for the wheat sale were received. Because of this quick action, American exporters and our farmers sold our wheat, but just in the nick of time. Had we not acted then, surely the Australian, Canadian or French wheat farmers would have gladly become Pakistan's new primary supplier of wheat.

Mr. Speaker, this Member also believes it is important to state what this legislation does not do in order to reinforce the balanced nature of the bill. House Resolution 17 does not alter any current sanctions because it would only affect embargoes that apply selectively to agriculture products like President Carter's ill-fated and totally ineffective unilateral grain embargo on the Soviet Union in 1980 or President Ford's unilateral, anti-farmer short-supply soybean embargo. The former embargo benefited European grain farmers while having no impact on the Soviet Union or its invasion of Afghanistan. The latter short-supply soybean embargo devastated American soybean farmers while creating our major soybean export competition in Brazil.

House Resolution 17 does not restrict the President's ability to impose cross-sector embargoes or apply to multilateral embargoes in which all of our agricultural competitors agree to the same export prohibitions we have imposed on our agricultural sector against the targeted country. This legislation reinforces the approach contemplated by this Member, that is that future export sanctions should be across the board and, whenever possible, multilateral, so that our competitor countries are also affected. And, if there is any room for any exception to that kind of embargo, it should be for food and medical exports. Food should not be used as tool of foreign policy.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to thanking our colleague from Illinois for his outstanding work on this measure, this Member would also like to

thank the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the International Relations and Agriculture Committees, Messrs. GILMAN, GEJDENSON, COMBEST and STENHOLM, respectively, as well as International Relations Subcommittee Chairwoman ROS-LEHTINEN and Ranking Member MENENDEZ for considering this legislation expeditiously. In the view of this Member, H.R. 17 is one of the more important steps the 106th Congress is taking on behalf of farmers and agricultural trade.

Mr. Speaker, the Selective Agriculture Embargoes Act is a measured and responsible bill that protects the American farmer and the American agricultural sector from unnecessary and unwarranted harm while at the same time preserving an important foreign policy tool. This Member, therefore, urges his colleagues to vote for H.R. 17.

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 17, the Selective Agricultural Embargoes Act of 1999. I commend Mr. Ewing for his leadership on this issue, and I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of this legislation.

H.R. 17 requires that if the President acts to implement an embargo of any agricultural commodity to any country, the President must notify Congress of the reasons for the embargo and of the period of time that the embargo will be in effect. Congress then has 100 days to approve or disapprove the embargo. The President's action is approved by Congress, the embargo will terminate on the date determined by the President or 1 year after Congress considered the embargo, whichever occurs earliest. If Congress disapproves of the embargo, it will terminate at the end of a hundred day period.

For well over a year, America's farmers have been suffering from prolonged low commodity prices and decreased export sales. In times like these, it is doubly important that food not be used as a weapon in political battles between nations. The grain embargo of the Soviet Union in the 1970s not only closed the door to one market for America's farm exports, but it also sent a loud message to our trading partners that the United States does not always deal in good faith. This legislation will help assure other countries that it is safe to do business with us, while also assuring our farmers that they are not being used as a foreign policy tool.

Another policy which need to be reformed, in order to stop the damage that it is doing to America's farmers, is the use of sanctions against foreign nations. Congress needs to take up sanctions reform legislation as soon as possible to provide our farmers with more markets for their products. Food should not be used as a weapon, whether it is in the form of a sanction or an embargo.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 17, the Selective Agricultural Embargoes Act, because it is a vote for the future of America's farmers.

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EWING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 17.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 17, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

#### EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER ESCALATING VIOLENCE, GROSS VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND ONGOING ATTEMPTS TO OVERTHROW DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT IN SIERRA LEONE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 62) expressing concern over the escalating violence, the gross violations of human rights, and the ongoing attempts to overthrow a democratically elected government in Sierra Leone, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

#### H. RES. 62

Whereas the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) military junta, which on May 27, 1997, overthrew the democratically elected government of Sierra Leone led by President Ahmed Kabbah, suspended the constitution, banned political activities and public meetings, and invited the rebel fighters of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to join the junta;

Whereas the AFRC and RUF then mounted "Operation No Living Thing", a campaign of killing, egregious human rights violations, and looting, that continued until President Kabbah was restored to power by the Economic Community of West African States Military Observation Group (ECOMOG) on March 10, 1998;

Whereas the AFRC and RUF have escalated their 8 year reign of terror against the citizens of Sierra Leone, which includes heinous acts such as forcibly amputating the limbs of defenseless civilians of all ages, raping women and children, and wantonly killing innocent citizens;

Whereas the Kamajor civil defense group has committed summary executions of captured rebels and persons suspected of aiding the rebels;

Whereas the AFRC and RUF continue to abduct children, forcibly provide them with military training, and place them on the front-line during rebel incursions;

Whereas countries in and outside of the region, including Liberia, Burkina Faso, and Libya, and mercenaries from Ukraine and other countries, are directly supporting the AFRC/RUF terrorist campaign against the legitimate government and citizens of Sierra Leone;

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that last year more than 210,000 Sierra Leoneans fled the country to Guinea, bringing the number to 350,000, most of whom have left Sierra Leone to escape the AFRC/RUF campaign of terror and atrocities, as have an additional 90,000 Sierra Leoneans who have sought safe haven in Liberia;

Whereas the refugee camps in Guinea and Liberia may be at risk of being used as safe